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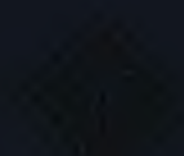
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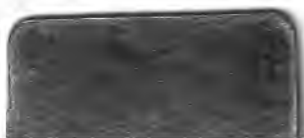
# VANISHED FACES

AND OTHER POEMS





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# VANISHED FACES

And other Poems.

BY

JANE BESEMERES.

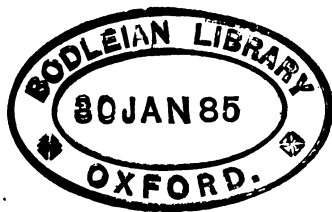
*'Life is brief, but love is long.'*—TENNYSON.

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## Vanished Faces.

EVERY spring the same flowers mind us  
Death is weak and Life is strong ;  
Every night the same stars give us  
Hope of better light ere long.

If each spring *new* flowers unfolded,  
Would they be one half so dear  
As the old familiar blossoms  
We have loved thro' many a year ?

If each night some strange *new* glory  
Shone upon us from above,  
Tho' we looked on it with wonder,  
Should we look on it with love ?—

As on stars that always watched us,  
Linked in thought with earliest years,  
Dear old friends that whispered comfort  
Even to our childhood's fears ?

Night is falling, Death's cold winter  
Steals our flowers ; but his dread reign  
Soon will end, and vanished faces  
Some spring day will smile again.

The same faces we remember,  
With the old familiar smile,  
Winter graves and night's dark silence  
Only last a little while.

### The Joy of Incompleteness.

IF all our lives were one broad glare  
Of sunlight, clear, unclouded ;  
If all our path were smooth and fair,  
By no soft gloom enshrouded ;  
If all life's flowers were fully blown,  
Without the sweet unfolding,  
And happiness were rudely thrown  
On hands too weak for holding :  
Should we not miss the twilight hours,  
The gentle haze and sadness ?  
Should we not long for storms and showers  
To break the constant gladness ?

If none were sick and none were sad,  
What service could we render ?  
I think if we were always glad,  
We scarcely could be tender.  
Did our beloved never need  
Our patient ministration,  
Earth would grow cold, and miss indeed  
Its sweetest consolation.  
If sorrow never claimed our heart,  
And every wish were granted,  
Patience would die, and hope depart,  
Life would be disenchanted.

And yet in heaven is no more night,  
In heaven is no more sorrow !  
Such unimagined new delight  
Fresh grace from pain will borrow.  
As the poor seed that underground  
Seeks its true life above it ;  
Not knowing what will there be found,  
When sunbeams kiss and love it ;  
So we in darkness upward grow,  
And look and long for heaven,  
But cannot picture it below  
Till more of light be given.

## Sunlight and Shadow.

SUNLIGHT and shadow play upon the hills,  
And chase each other on the restless waves,  
Seeming to follow but their own sweet wills,  
Yet to the powers above them faithful slaves ;  
Reflecting every changing cloud with ease,  
Stirred by a leaf and dancing with the breeze.

O blessed shadows ! who so kind as you,  
So patient, humble, generous, and good ?  
Obedient to the sun, and ever true ;  
Your presence beautifies the roughest road,  
Lends to the sternest rock a tender grace,  
And throws a charm upon the meanest place.

O blessed lights that make the shadows sweet !  
That make the world so exquisitely fair !  
Life is more full when lights and shadows meet,  
Than in the midnight gloom or noonday glare ;  
And human hearts have little tenderness  
Till grief and joy have met in fond caress.

### A Wish.

O FOR a spirit pure and meek,  
Life's many joys to see !  
Those lowly joys that I must seek,  
Or lose unthankfully.

That blaze not out before the sight,  
Or lift their flowers too high,  
But may be gathered with delight  
By every passer-by.

O for a cheerful heart and gay,  
That never vainly frets !  
But stoops to gather every day  
Earth's humble violets.

And if some nettle rudely sting,  
Seeks instant sure relief,  
And lower stoops, while gathering  
A cool and healing leaf.

Thus finding joy in common things,  
And not surprised by pain :  
The leaf I find to heal life's stings  
May turn them all to gain.

**Good-bye.**

GOOD-BYE, good-bye ! it is the sweetest blessing  
That falls from mortal lips on mortal ear,  
The weakness of our human love confessing,  
The promise that a love more strong is near.  
May God be with you !

Why do we say it when the tears are starting ?  
Why must a word so sweet bring only pain ?  
*Our* love seems all-sufficient till the parting,  
And then we feel it impotent and vain.  
May God be with you !

O may He guide and bless and keep you ever,  
He who is strong to battle with your foes ;  
Whoever fails, His love can fail you never,  
And all your need, He in His wisdom knows.  
May God be with you !

Better than earthly presence, e'en the dearest,  
Is the great blessing which our partings  
bring,  
For in the loneliest moments God is nearest,  
And from our sorrows heavenly comforts  
spring,  
If God be with us.



Good-bye, good-bye ! with latest breath we say  
it,  
A legacy of hope and faith and love ;  
Parting must come, we cannot long delay it,  
But, one in Him, we hope to meet above,  
If God be with us.

Good-bye ! 'tis all we have for one another ;  
Our love, more strong than death, is helpless  
still ;  
For none can take the burden from his brother,  
Or shield, except by prayer, from any ill.  
May God be with you !

**Silence.**

(Written during a snowstorm.)

SILENTLY falleth  
The pitying snow,  
Bountiful rivers  
All silently flow ;  
Silently shineth  
The sun in the sky,  
Silently twinkle  
The great lights on high ;  
Silently groweth  
The corn in the field ;  
Silently, quietly,  
Deep wounds are healed ;  
Silently loving,  
A strong heart is won,  
Silently working,  
A good deed is done.

Noisily waketh  
The thunder's loud roar,  
Noisily breaketh  
The foam on the shore.

Loud is the cannon,  
And fierce is the strife,  
When man against man  
Is warring for life.  
Hatred is loud,  
And contention doth cry,  
But softer than summer  
Is Pity's low sigh.  
Winds that are cruel  
Are heeded by all,  
But no man regardeth  
When soft breezes fall.

Earth's loudest battles  
Will cease before long ;  
Goodness is silent,  
And silence is strong.  
The temple was builded  
Without any clamour,  
No voices of workmen,  
Nor sounds of the hammer ;  
The kingdom of heaven  
In silence is growing ;  
The nations, like rivers,  
Unto it are flowing.  
We hear of the wicked,  
Their vice and their woe,  
But the prayers of the saints  
Have no record below.

**An Invitation.**

LISTEN, what do the breezes say,  
Full of the breath of the sweet fresh hay?  
Come away!  
Leave your work and come and play,  
Or make the hay!  
Come away, come away!

Listen, what do the thrushes say,  
Thrushes and finches and wrens to day?  
Come away!  
All the birds twitter of mirth and play,  
So merry are they!  
Come away, come away!

Look at the sunbeams, joyful and gay,  
Chasing the shadows so madly to-day!  
What say they?  
Put all the books and the work away,  
It is holiday,  
Old Dame Nature's holiday.

Are you then deaf that you plod to-day  
At your common tasks, while such messengers  
say

Come away !

O learn the worth of an idle day !

Come away, come away  
Into the fields with the sweet fresh hay.

**New and Old.**

NEW little feet  
Patter on the floor,  
New little faces  
Peep thro' the door ;  
New little souls  
Have entered into life,  
New little voices  
Speak in love or strife ;  
New little fingers  
Tightly clasp our own,  
New little tendrils  
Round our hearts have grown.

Still the old voices  
Echo in our ear,  
And the old faces  
Hallowed are and dear ;  
Still the old friends  
Who have passed away  
Live in our affection ;  
Love has no decay.  
And the old words,  
Spoken long ago,  
Keep the heart tender,  
Make the tears flow.

Thus New and Old  
Mingle in one,  
Each has its blessing,  
And when life is done,  
Old faces, old friends  
Will meet us again,  
Treasures long buried  
We shall regain ;  
All that is lovely,  
All that is true,  
Will live on for ever,  
The Old and the New

## A Day in Autumn.

(November 15, 1873.)

WHEN the last leaves linger on the trees,  
And the sky is blue and clear,  
And the sun smiles down, how he seems to  
crown  
The old departing year !

In the summer he *shone*, but now he smiles ;  
Undazzled we lift our eyes,  
For the heavenly light is scarce too bright  
When seen in wintry skies.

The leaves are dying, the innocent leaves,  
And humbly they lie at our feet ;  
The day speaks of death with its every breath,  
And yet it is passing sweet.

The warm, rich tints of varying brown,  
And the gold on which sunlight glows,  
The tender green here and there to be seen,  
With just a glimmer of rose,—



All these are lovely, but not in these  
Lie the charm of this perfect day ;  
It comes after mist, as if heaven had kissed  
The clouds and the tears away.

May the sun thus gladden my fading leaf,  
And heaven's clear blue be in sight,  
And my life at its close share the deep repose  
Of to-day with its golden light !

**St. Andrew's Day.**

IF we have heard the Saviour's voice  
Speak to our troubled soul,  
If we have felt His healing touch  
Who only can make whole ;  
If we have seen a ray of light  
From His blest presence shine,  
Shall we not bring our brethren near  
To share the light divine ?

If 'mid the sorrows of our lives  
We have a hope secure,  
A hope that in the midst of pain  
Gives patience to endure ;  
If Christ, thus shining in our hearts,  
Makes life seem good and sweet,  
Shall we not bring desponding souls  
To rest at His dear feet ?

If, as He took the little maid,  
He takes *us* by the hand,  
And life flows in, the higher life,  
At His benign command ;  
If we can now arise and walk,  
No longer dead in sin,  
Shall we not in His name go forth  
And call the outcasts in ?

Thy servant, when he found Thee, Lord,  
Followed Thee not alone,  
But called his brother joyously  
Ere yet the day was done.  
Like him, may we our brethren find,  
And bid them come and see  
The Christ who lives to bless our souls  
As then in Galilee.

### On the Threshold.

WHAT is in the Past ?  
O what is in the Past ?  
Love that seemed a part of life,  
Joys that could not last ;  
Hopes that long since vanished,  
Pleasures dead and gone,  
Friends who have departed,  
Leaving me alone.

What is in the Present ?  
Little clouds of care,  
Little common duties,  
Nothing great or rare ;  
Friends, but not the dearest ;  
Joys, but not too bright ;  
Shadows falling gently,  
Heralding the night.

What is in the Future ?  
Is it not the Past,  
Glorified and holy,  
Given back at last ?  
Hope's most wondrous vision,  
Love's most perfect bliss,  
Mine, and mine for ever,—  
Make me meet for this !

### Rain in Summer.

Drip, drip ! graciously, lovingly  
Falls the kind rain on the dry thirsty ground ;  
Drip, drip ! we drink in the melody,  
Is it not lulling, the cool dripping sound ?

Drip, drip ! what music surpasses it,  
Voice of the life-giving, bountiful rain ?  
Drip, drip ! the green things all hearing it  
Breathe in fresh beauty and vigour again.

Drip, drip ! soft as the love kisses  
Showered on her infant by mother's own lips,  
Each little raindrop a marvel of tenderness,  
Blessing the roof or the tree as it drips.

Kissing the trees, and the earth, and the cottages,  
Singing its lullaby sweetly to all ;  
Yet the dear little ones (would it were *only*  
these !)  
Ask in sad questioning *why* raindrops fall.

May 16, 1883.

THE morn is glad,—with radiant mirth  
She hails the coming of the spring ;  
A gentle stir is in the earth,  
A light of love on everything.

A quiver as of breath divine,  
A warmth as from a Father's smile,  
And joy lights on this heart of mine  
With folded wings a little while.

It may be but a day—an hour,—  
Yet while it resteth let me sing,  
And praise Him who reveals His power  
In all the tenderness of spring.

### Violets—Old and New.

CRUSHED and withered and old,—  
Never a fragrant leaf ;  
Cherished with love untold,  
Hallowed and shrined by grief.  
Witness of days gone by,  
Pledge of a word once given,  
A word that can never die,  
That is less of earth than heaven.

Fragrant and sweet and new,  
Fresh from the hedge to-day,  
Covered with morning dew,  
And yet—I give them away.  
They perfumed my room, and told  
Stories both wise and true ;  
Yet I cannot part with the old,  
And I lightly part with the new.

### Growing Old.

O BRIGHT and happy childish days,  
When everything was sweet and new,  
And every one was good and true,  
Seen in life's early morning haze !

O eager time of earnest youth,  
When visions rose of combat strong,  
And glorious conquest over wrong,  
And victories won in cause of truth !

O time long past, when life was young,  
When Hope was warm and Fancy high,  
And the lark singing in the sky  
Could charm me as an angel's song !

When Feeling, tenderly awake  
To pleasure, as to passing pain,  
Thrilled, as it will not *here* again,  
And of a dream a heaven could make.

Now, as in quiet evening hours  
The chilly breezes oft arise,  
And cold grey clouds veil summer skies,  
And closed are earth's most lovely flowers,



Such change has passed upon my life ;  
Fancy is dull and Feeling cold,  
I know that I am growing old,  
I mix no longer in the strife,

But wait and watch in the calm faith  
That good will triumph over ill,  
That nought can stay th' Eternal will,  
And life will be the end of death.

‘He Welcomed them.’

· LUKE ix. 11 (*Revised Version*).

‘HE welcomed them’—each sad and weary soul  
In all that multitude who came to Him ;  
He soothed their sorrows, made their dear ones  
whole,  
And gave back sight to eyes long blind or dim.

‘He welcomed them’—how little did they know  
That He was weary, having need of rest,  
Who thought not of Himself ; glad to bestow  
Blessings on all who round Him thronged and  
pressed.

‘He welcomed them’—the thought is very sweet,  
May it be with us in the hour of prayer,  
And, as we draw around His sacred feet,  
Remind us that we have a welcome there.

*Thy* welcome, Lord ! What will it be to see  
Thy smile of welcome in the home above,  
To hear Thy voice, welcoming even me,  
Unworthy as I am of Thy great love.

### One by one they Go.

ONE by one they go,  
Our dear ones, and we see them not again,  
And all our love and all our life seems vain,  
And nothing real but woe.

Yet could we see  
The happy spirit on the far-off shore,  
Where grief and sickness can be felt no more,  
From earth set free,—

Our tears might fall,  
But they would be such tears as angels shed  
When one is raised to life who has been dead  
To mercy's call.

Not death, but life  
Is real ; not things we see, but things unseen,  
All good that is, or will be, or has been,  
Amid earth's strife.

Sorrow will die,  
And death itself, and sin an end will find,  
As clouds which pass away, and leave behind  
The tender sky.

But all things pure,  
All the affection which makes earth so sweet,  
All that we love and lay at Jesus' feet,  
These will endure.

**Prov. iv. 23.**

‘Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the  
issues of life.’

THERE is no heart without some tender graces,  
That, fostered by the sun and dew, take root ;  
No heart, alas ! without its desert places,  
Its barren soil, its withered leaves and fruit.

No life without its deeds of love and kindness,  
Which we remember when its day is done ;  
No life, alas ! without its sin and blindness,  
Keeping it back from much it might have  
won.

Yet are there hearts and lives so full of blessing,  
Their good seems boundless, and we see no  
stain,  
But marvel at their beauty, little guessing  
The inward struggle and the wearing pain.

And lives there are, bring cruel desolation,  
Weeping and anguish, as they onward press :  
We mark the sin, and speak the condemnation,  
But of the hidden wounds we little guess.

Let us be tender, then, with one another,  
Yet of ourselves be judges true and stern,  
So holding forth the light, an erring brother  
May from the ways of wretchedness return.

### Hereafter.

WHEN we meet in the glad Hereafter  
In the perfect world of bliss,  
Our little human pleasures  
Shall we not somewhat miss  
We know they are only trifles,  
The book, the familiar words,  
The prattle of childish voices,  
The garden, the singing birds ;

The joy of our daily labour,  
The rest when our work is done,  
The innocent laughter of children,  
The gladsome feast and the fun ;  
The dear little arms that enfold us,  
The cheek that so tightly is prest  
To our own,—they are all very earthly,  
And yet by these things we are blest.

We need not fear, for our Father  
Gave us these pleasant things,  
To lift us upward to heaven  
As if upon angels' wings.

He knows the sweet gifts He has given,  
The symbols and tokens of love,  
Are dear to our human affections,—  
We shall not miss them above,

Save as we miss the tapers  
When the sun is warm and bright,  
As we miss the precious letters  
When the wanderer is in sight ;  
As we miss the vague, strange longing  
For a home that is far away,  
When we find ourselves within it  
After many a weary day ;

As we miss the happy dreaming  
When we waken and find it true,  
As we miss a faded flower  
When the nosegay is made anew ;  
As we miss the treasured relic  
That in absence we often kissed,  
When the dear, dear presence is with us ;—  
So will these things be missed.

The trifles we prize are pledges  
And seals of a perfect love ;—  
The hand that has worn it may hallow  
A ring or a worthless glove.  
Such tokens may well be cherished  
As priceless while we are alone,  
But we lay them aside unregretting  
When the hand and the heart are our own.



### Hymn for Home Missions.

A CRY of countless thousands  
    Bending beneath their load,  
A hopeless, agonizing cry  
    From souls that know not God.  
A voice of deep compassion—  
    ‘Children, their trouble see,  
For as ye minister to these,  
    Ye minister to Me.’

A moan from our great cities,  
    Of those who faint and die,  
Wanting the very Bread of Life,  
    While we are standing by.  
A voice of sad entreaty—  
    ‘Children, their hunger see,  
For if ye give not unto these,  
    Ye give not unto Me.’

Strong cries from souls in prison,  
    Strangers to love and peace,  
O’ermastered by despair and sin,  
    Yet struggling for release.

A voice of stern remonstrance—  
‘Children, you have the key,  
And if you open not to these,  
You open not to Me.’

O brothers, can you bear it,  
That cry of human pain?  
Are souls all dying round us,  
And must they plead in vain?  
O brothers, can you hear it,  
That voice of Love Divine?—  
‘These souls unshepherded and lost,  
These ruined souls are Mine.

‘Behold, I come before you,  
Hungry, athirst, and poor;  
I come as one in prison,  
And beat against the door;  
In pain I come, and weeping,  
The while you dwell at ease;—  
O hearken to Me while you may  
By hearkening unto these!’

### Another's Grief.

My life, if I could give it  
For that dear suffering soul,  
How gladly would I lay it down  
To make his spirit whole !  
His wounded, quivering spirit,  
So near unto my own ;  
And yet his burden he must bear  
In all its weight, alone.

O human love, how helpless,  
How weak a thing thou art !  
Canst thou not take the arrow  
From one poor wounded heart ?  
Canst thou not stand before him,  
Thy dearest and thy best,  
And bear a while the torment,  
That he, thine own, may rest ?

Alas ! we have small reason  
For boasting or for pride,  
When sorrow claims our loved one's heart,  
And we must stand aside ;

Watching in awful silence,  
Watching, but all in vain,  
Tho' by the agonising strife  
Our soul be rent in twain.


Dear Lord, in Thy compassion  
Help us to bear this hour,  
The comfort of our feebleness  
Is only in Thy power.  
Our weakness hath this glory,  
It rises into prayer,  
And we, as little children,  
May trust our Father's care.

### The Distant View.

CUT down, cut down, while its leaves were green !  
How tall and straight it grew !  
But no joy that it gave could its young life save,  
For it hindered the distant view.  
The birds will miss it, the merry birds,  
The children will miss it too ;  
In its kindly shade they have often played,  
And they heed not the distant view.

But *we* cannot part with that range of hills,  
With their purple and green and gold ;  
The faint sea-line we can scarce define,  
And the charms of a distance untold.  
Full often, indeed, it is hidden from sight,  
And the mist, like a curtain rolled  
By an unseen hand, veils the fairy land  
That we strain our eyes to behold.

But we love it more that 'tis only seen  
On some rare and happy days ;  
There is room for faith, and our fancy hath  
Pleasant dreams while we fondly gaze.



There is room for hope, there is room for love,  
There is room for joy and praise,  
When we see anew the enchanting view  
After many gloomy days.

Cut down, cut down, your fondest hope !  
Most fair and sweet it grew ;  
Alas for the pain ! but your loss is gain,  
It opens the distant view.  
Your heart will miss it,—your poor torn heart ;  
It was heaven itself to you,—  
But raise your eyes to the clear blue skies,  
And rejoice in the distant view.



## Grief.

## AN ODE.

YOU say, 'It is well, she is blest ;  
No more from her eyes  
Will tears run down, no more her feet will  
tread  
The thorny path where they were hurt and bled ;  
No more will she arise  
To take her heavy burden day by day,  
Too heavy for her strength which ebbd away,  
And now, dear love, she can lie down and rest.'  
You say, 'It is well !' alas,  
I can but feel my utter misery,  
The aching void, the longing for a touch  
From that dear hand that comforted so much ;  
The longing for her voice that never more  
Will speak to me on this life's dreary shore ;  
The longing for one smile from her dear eyes.  
O say not, 'It is well !'  
Can it be well that my poor heart should bleed,  
That all my little store of happiness,  
All that did bless  
My earthly life, should fail me at my need ?  
I never had too much of joy, indeed,



That I could spare this precious one to Death,  
Whose icy breath  
Has chilled the world for me and left it bare,—  
A world that her sweet presence had made fair.  
O say not, 'It is well !'  
For all my thoughts rebel.  
Can it be well that I am left alone,  
That peace and joy are flown,  
And my heart turned to stone ?  
Can it be well if at mid-day  
The sun go down in heaven,  
And all fair things are blotted from the earth,  
All that we cared for from the hour of birth,  
All that was given  
To bless our lives, suddenly dashed away ?  
Can it be well  
To crush a wounded spirit, and to bruise  
A soul already sick, till it refuse,  
Almost refuse the only solace left,  
And turn from God Himself, of hope bereft ?

'Child, all is well,  
Save that thy heart rebel ;  
And sin can turn a paradise to hell.  
Take thy poor heart, sore wounded and dismayed,  
Take it to Him who knows, for He hath made,  
His touch will heal, thou need'st not be afraid.  
Yes, all is well !  
The winter's frost must come before the spring,  
And deep heart-silence ere the angels sing.'

### Clouds.

WHEN the clouds gather,  
    Sadly we cry,  
‘Darkness below,  
    Darkness on high ;  
O for the sunshine  
    To gladden our way !  
Why must we walk  
    Thro’ the darkness to-day ?’

When the clouds fall  
    In great drops of rain,  
Does not the heart  
    Too often complain ?  
Yet the sweet blossoms,  
    The fruit and the flowers,  
Where would they be  
    But for earth’s saddened hours ?

When the clouds break,  
    What do we see ?  
Heaven’s tender blue  
    For you and for me ;

Still the sun shedding  
Its glory above :  
Hearts may be faithless,  
But God's law is love.

### What is the Spring ?

WHAT is the Spring ? oh who can tell ?  
It is not the breath of the southern wind,  
Or the wealth of the beauty it leaves behind ;  
It is not the sunshine or the showers,  
The budding leaves, or the opening flowers :  
It is more, far more than these.

What is the Spring, the happy Spring ?  
Is it the tender voice of love  
That makes the heart of the world to move ?  
Is it an echo of sinless mirth  
That has fallen from heaven to bless the earth ?  
It is these, but more than these.

What more, what more ? do you question  
still ?  
Who can say what is hid in a word  
That lives thro' a lifetime tho' scarcely heard ?  
Who knows what a smile or a sigh can show  
Of the deep full heart which lies below ?  
When you have told me this—

When the dreams and hopes, or a thousandth  
part  
Of the depths of love in a human heart  
Can be told in words, we may strive to say,  
What is hid in the Spring to unfold some day,  
    'Tis the Father's smile and kiss.

### The Children's Home.

POOR little children, barefoot and cold,  
Living in alleys 'mid sorrows untold,  
Never a flower to brighten the place,  
Never a smile on the mother's worn face,  
Never a joy in the desolate home,  
Never a thought of the life that's to come !

Happier children, joyous and gay,  
Living like sunbeams for ever at play !  
Smiles and caresses are yours from your birth,  
Flowers bloom around you, and gladden the  
earth ;  
Happy you are in your beautiful home,  
With sweet childish thoughts of the life that's  
to come.

Dear little children, look, look above !  
The same heaven is o'er you, the same God of  
love ;  
Help one another, and you who are glad,  
Give to the hungry and comfort the sad.  
God bring you all to His heavenly Home,  
Blessing your tears in the life that's to come.

### Transplanted.

IT throve in its own sweet nook,  
But with ruthless hand I took  
    The sapling rose away ;  
Far from its parent tree,  
From the soil where it loved to be,  
    And it hangs its head all day.

The flowers around are strange,  
And it loveth not the change,  
    For the soil is not its own ;  
So in grief it hangs its head,  
And the old leaves, withered and dead,  
    Fall meekly one by one.

The old leaves fall away,  
And the rose-bush seems to decay  
    For a little while ;  
But under an open sky  
It will bud again by and by,  
    Cheered by the heaven's sweet smile

The sunbeams and the rain  
Will make it new again  
In a little while ;  
And leaves of tender green  
Unfolding will be seen,  
Under the heaven's sweet smile.

O for that heaven of blue,  
So tender and so true,  
With its kindly sun and rain !  
Heaven is in every place,  
And gives new life and grace  
To hearts worn out with pain.



*In Memoriam.*

W. G. D.

SWEET as the summer morn  
At sunrise, when the day begins to smile,  
And flowers will open in a little while,  
So sweet was our own darling's early dawn.

Sudden as clouds that rise  
When morn has brightly opened on the world,  
And flowers their petals have but half unfurled,  
So sudden was the storm that veiled our skies.

It came, and fairest things  
That we had dreamed and hoped for coming  
years  
Are all laid low beneath the weight of tears,  
And Joy with our lost darling spreads her  
wings.

But tho' the sky be grey,  
The heavy clouds will melt in blessed rain,  
And heaven's unchanging blue alone remain,  
When storms that have obscured it pass away.

### Easter Day.

THOU who, amid the dust and toil,  
The heat and burden of the day,  
Art tightly bound in Satan's coil,  
And fainting upon life's highway,  
    Wilt thou be free ?  
    Look up and pray ;  
    Christ rose for thee  
    On Easter Day.

Thou who, in sadness or in pain,  
Art weary of the tyrant sin,  
A friend is near, and He would fain  
Cast out thy foe and enter in.  
    Resist no more,  
    But bid Him stay ;  
    Open the door  
    This Easter Day.

Thou who art mourning for the loss  
Of loved ones, lying in the grave,  
Remember Jesus bore the cross,  
Their souls and thine to heal and save.

Death and the tomb  
His voice obey ;  
Rise from thy gloom  
On Easter Day.

Thou who, in penitence and tears,  
Art walking with a heavy load,  
And filled with anxious doubts and fears  
Because thou hast not trusted God,  
At Jesus' feet  
Thy burden lay ;  
Him Thou wilt meet  
This Easter Day.

Thou who art serving Him in love,  
Following His footsteps, tho' afar,  
Trials will come thy faith to prove,  
But take Him for thy guiding star.  
His goodness then  
He will display,  
Who rose for men  
On Easter Day.

Ye thoughtless ones, who never raise  
Your hearts to Him who loves you so,  
Who walk alone in pleasant ways,  
And hope to find Him in your woe ;  
Thus self-deceived,  
What can I say ?  
Be grieved, yes, grieved,  
This Easter Day.

### On Pettie's Picture of 'The Palmer.'

Exhibited at the Royal Academy, 1882.

COME to me, little children,  
Bright with the dew of youth,  
Pure little hearts that listen,  
And eyes that see the truth.  
To some, alas ! the story  
Of purpose high and grand  
Is dull and void of meaning,  
But *you* will understand.

Your eyes have not been blinded  
By the dust on life's highway,  
Your ears have not been deafened  
By this world's humdrum lay ;  
Your hearts have not been hardened  
To 'do as others do :'  
So come, my little children,  
I'll tell the tale to you.

I'll tell you of the battles,  
The hardship and the pain,  
How men have fought and suffered  
A noble cause to gain.

I see your eyes are shining  
With a new and tender light,  
For you see a far-off glory,  
And you long to join the fight.

I'll tell you of my wanderings  
Beneath a burning sun,  
All through a sandy desert,  
In eager hope begun ;  
In deep thanksgiving ended,  
When on the Holy Land,  
Where long my heart had rested,  
My weary feet could stand.

Children, you too are pilgrims,  
Start on your journey now,  
With hearts unstained, unclouded,  
True to your early vow !  
You too must conquer bravely,  
And one day you will stand,  
The journey of life being over,  
In the rest of the Holy Land.

### Day-Dreams.


DREAMS, fast-flying dreams,  
How quickly they come and go !  
As a flash of light on a moonless night,  
Unveiling the scene below.

Dreams ! whence do they come ?  
Are they *only* meteor lights,  
A moment our own, then for ever flown ?  
Alas for the cold dark nights !

Dreams, bright-coloured dreams,  
Are they delusions all,  
As the mirage flies from the wanderer's eyes,  
And the rainbow bubbles fall ?

Dreams, shadowy dreams,  
Are they shadows and nothing more ?  
Nay, the likeness is thrown by a form unknown,  
And the shadow goeth before.

Dreams, beautiful dreams,  
They are flow'rs that too quickly die,  
And we bitterly weep. But they only sleep  
To waken again by and by.



**'Not Dead.'**

ONLY beyond our sight,  
Just for a little while,  
We cannot hear our loved one's voice,  
We cannot see his smile.

But still he is not dead,  
That were a cruel word ;  
We will but say he is gone home  
To his ascended Lord.

Home, where his powers will grow,  
Home, where no grief or pain,  
No sorrow such as ours can wound  
His loving heart again.

O that the veil were drawn,  
That we could see him now !  
His radiant joy would quickly chase  
The gloom from off our brow.

We could not then be sad ;  
But oh, the sight of heaven  
Would make our earthly home so cold,  
It may not yet be given.

How could we live below  
In this bleak world of care,  
If for one moment we had gazed  
Upon the rapture there?



### The Wind.

O RESTLESS and desponding wind,  
Wilt thou not cease thy sighing ?  
My heart, so full of weary thoughts,  
Is sadder for thy crying.  
The constant, melancholy wail  
Of thine outspoken pity,  
Seems like the dirge of every hope,  
A low funereal ditty.

Shine out, kind sun ! on all the earth  
A robe of glory flinging ;  
Wake, little birds, with merry hearts,  
And let me hear your singing.  
Perchance a smile on Nature's face,  
Some gleam of hope revealing,  
May touch the spring of tears, and wake  
My heavy heart to feeling.

But thy sad wail, O sobbing wind !  
Thy sorrowful regretting,  
Seems but to speak of restless fears  
All patient trust forgetting.  
I cannot bear the pitying moan  
That only tells of sorrow,  
For I would fain lift up my heart  
And wait the glad To-morrow.

**Baby.**

O BABY, laughing on the world,  
Laughing thou knowest not why,  
Thou happy little soul, how sweet  
The laughter of thine eye !

The dimples round thy tiny mouth,  
The lovely curves that say  
Without a word more happy things  
Than tongue of mortal may.

Thou hast no word, my little one,  
To fit thy baby thought ;  
Hast thou a thought, or are thy smiles  
From mother's rapture caught ?

Thine is the sweetness of new life,  
The laughter of the spring ;  
Perfect and pure the while it lasts,  
Fleet as an angel's wing.

No pain is in thy laugh, no thought  
Of any sorrow near ;  
And yet, what is it, sweetest one,  
That brings the sudden tear ?

For now thy weeping is as wild  
As April's driving showers ;  
Earth's brightest spring has tempest-drops  
As well as laughing flowers.

O baby, baby, hush thee, dear !  
Look up again, and see !  
There's a bright bow o'er all the world,  
And love for you and me.

## Sonnets.

### THE POWER OF DEATH.

‘ Him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.’—  
HEB. ii. 14.

‘ YEA, doth God love thee ? open now thine ear  
And listen to the wail of death and pain.  
Is not thy dearest hope the earliest slain ?  
And canst thou hold one joy untouched by  
fear ?

Hope not for happiness, the world is drear ;  
Hope not for love, or thou wilt hope in vain ;  
Hope not for life or victory, nor strain  
Thine arm to fight with evil,—death is near.’  
Thus tempting men thro’ the great power of  
death,

The devil bids them eat and drink in haste,  
For on the morrow they will die, he saith.  
And many reckless souls, despairing, taste  
Of all forbidden fruits, and the pure breath  
Of life, which God breathed into them, they  
waste.

## THE POWER OF LIFE.

‘He that hath the Son hath life.’—1 JOHN v. 12.

YES, God *doth* love us : could we hear aright,  
The wail of pain is mingled up above  
With prayers of deep unutterable love  
From the blest company of saints in light.  
And ministering angels, hid from sight,  
Come down to guard our footsteps as we move ;  
And nearer still than these, the Holy Dove  
Broodeth upon our hearts thro’ the long night.  
The day will break at last,—Christ came to win  
Such life for us as fancy cannot paint.  
With Him to love us, can we bear to sin ?  
With Him to guard us, can our spirits faint ?  
With Him to teach us, can we fail to know  
That love Divine transfigures human woe ?

### The Ancient Faith.

LET us go back to the ancient time  
When our Saviour walked with men,  
And live in the light of the same pure sun  
That was shining so brightly then !  
Like the earthly sun, it is no less clear  
As the centuries roll away ;  
Then why do we choose a darkened room,  
And shut out the light of day !

Let us go back to the ancient words  
That were spoken by Christ of old,—  
The words it were sadder than death to lose,  
And better than life to hold,—  
The words of warning so clear and strong,  
The words of love so true ;—  
They are old indeed, but to Christian hearts  
They are fresh as the morning dew.

Let us go back to the ancient Book  
That tells of Christ's life below,  
Of the tears He shed, and the pain He bore  
For the children of want and woe.

How can we know Him unless we read ?  
Alas, we forget His face !  
That life, those words, the tears and the pain,  
Have left but a feeble trace.

Let us go back to the ancient Church  
That was builded on Christ alone,  
Then all to whom He indeed is dear  
As brethren we shall own.  
Let us go back to the Cross, and there  
In reverent wonder gaze,  
Till our spirit burns with the love and zeal  
That brightened the former days.

## Matt. xiii. 10.

ONE is my Master, even Christ ;  
No other do I see  
Worthy of all my heart's deep love,  
And Christ says—' Follow me.'

One is my Master, even Christ ;  
All other voices seem,  
Save only as they echo His,  
Like voices in a dream.

One is my Master, even Christ ;  
If He but guide my way,  
Appointing all my daily work,  
How can I go astray ?

One is my Master, even Christ ;  
How simple now and free,  
If I am faithful to this word,  
My earthly life may be !

One is my Master, even Christ ;  
O may I serve Him well,  
And never fear to own His name,  
Or in my heart rebel !



One is my Master, even Christ ;  
Dear Lord, O may I be  
Enabled now to take my cross  
And meekly follow Thee !

**‘Alway Rejoicing.’**

2 COR. vi. 10.

WHILE some make life one long, long grief  
By dwelling on its sadness,  
Is it not wise to find relief  
By drinking in its gladness ?

Each ray of sunlight in our room  
Has something sweet to teach us,  
But if we turn from it in gloom  
The blessing cannot reach us.

Each little lark that rises high,  
Each little flower up-springing,  
Even the cloudlets in the sky,  
May set the heart a-singing,

If only light, the heavenly light,  
Is on them freely glowing ;  
And we, with our dear Guide in sight,  
To that same heaven are going.

It is not all a desert drear  
Through which we have to travel,  
And He will make the puzzles clear  
We cannot now unravel.

As for the trials,—*here* He lays  
Such wondrous gifts beside them,  
That we can only give Him praise  
We have not been denied them.

### Why must I Die ?

‘ WHY must I die ?

Yon oak tree green, so full of leaves,  
That neither loves, nor hopes, nor grieves,  
That feels no gladness, will live on  
When my brief day of life is done.

Why must I die ?

‘ Why must I die ?

That stern old rock, unbending, cold,  
Has stood for centuries as bold,  
As heartless as it stands to-day :  
Time honours it, and bids it stay,  
While I must die.

‘ Why must I die ?

The rolling sea lives on, and laves  
The rock with its impetuous waves,  
Faithless and cruel tho’ it prove  
To hearts that trust it, and that love  
Its smile and sigh.

‘O tell me why  
This heart, so passionate, so full  
Of faithful love, must soon grow dull ;  
By Death’s cold hand be rudely chilled,  
And all its earnest longings stilled,—  
O tell me why !

‘Why must I die ?  
The earth is glad, and life is sweet ;  
Why are its happiest hours so fleet ?  
Why will the pebble on the shore  
Remain when I shall be no more ?  
Why must I die ?’

‘Thou shalt not die !  
The rock will crumble, and the tree  
Will die ; in heaven is “no more sea ;”  
But thy vast hopes, thy mighty heart,  
Earth cannot hold them,—so depart !  
Thou shalt not die !’

'Not a hearer that forgetteth, but a doer that worketh ;  
this man shall be blessed.'—*Revised Version*, JAMES i. 25 ;  
*see also verses 6-8.*

NOT a hearer only, that forgetteth,  
    Would I be,  
As the distant wave that fretteth  
    On the sea ;  
Sparkling just a moment, brightly shining,  
    In the sun,  
Changeful, restless, and declining,  
    Nothing conquered, nothing done.

Not as sea-foam by the wind that's driven  
    To and fro,  
Not by doubt and wavering riven,  
    Would I go.  
Rather as a *doer*, working ever  
    Day by day,  
From my faith and duty never,  
    Never swerving, sad or gay.

Little can we *know* till life is ended,  
    Little *see* ;  
But while good and ill are blended,  
    We may be

Strength unto the weak, by simply cleaving  
    To the right,  
Blest in doing and believing  
    Till our faith is lost in sight.

## An Incident of the London Mission.

1874.

THE stars looked down upon the restless city,  
And watched it through the night ;  
Kindled were other lamps, but yet in pity  
The tender stars gave light.

They looked upon young children calmly  
sleeping  
As only babes can sleep,  
They looked on many a wakeful mother weeping  
As desolate women weep.

They looked on some who sinned in reckless  
daring,  
On some who watched in pain ;  
They looked on preachers God's great love  
declaring,  
O shall that love be vain ?

For many days had earnest prayer ascended  
From all who knew their Lord,  
And now the Comforter in power descended,  
According to His word.



And as the preacher spoke in solemn warning,  
And pleaded with them there,  
Some who had greeted him with words of  
scorning  
Were moved to tears and prayer.

Beneath the stars there wandered sick and  
lonely,  
With heart and hopes all dead,  
A woman without friend or home, but only  
Her sins upon her head.

A kind voice stopped her, and as if beseeching  
Said—‘There is prayer to-night;  
Come.’ And a firm but gentle hand outreaching  
Drew her within the light,

Where many in the name of Christ were  
praying,  
Surely ’twas holy ground;  
And there she heard of the poor sheep that,  
straying,  
Was by the shepherd found.

And more,—she heard the old but wondrous  
story  
Of Him who came to save,  
Who laid aside His kingdom and His glory,  
Endured the cross and grave,

Only that He might have the joy of giving  
Salvation to the lost.  
'Come to Him,' said the preacher ; 'He is  
living,  
And thou art tempest-tost.

'The waves and billows of this world have nearly  
Drowned thy poor sinful soul ;  
But come to Him. He loves thee, O so dearly,  
And He will make thee whole.'

Then kneeling, he commended to the Father  
All who were perishing,  
And prayed that He the drowning souls would  
gather,  
And of His mercy bring

Safe to the Haven whence is no more straying,  
Safe to the Land of Light.  
The poor girl heard no more till one was  
saying,  
In gentle tones, 'Good-night.'

The same kind hand that first had led her  
hither  
Was laid upon her own,  
And, as she turned, the lady, walking with her,  
Said in an earnest tone,

‘The Lord Himself is knocking for admission  
At thy poor heart to-night.  
Deny Him not ; He gave me this commission  
To bring thee to the light.

‘And thou hast heard His messenger declaring  
The tidings of His love,  
How He is even now in heaven preparing  
A home for thee above.

‘O tell Him all thy sorrows, and, confessing  
Thy great unworthiness,  
Pray in thy secret chamber for His blessing,—  
He is so glad to bless.

‘And read this gospel—read of Christ, and follow,  
Else thou must surely die.’  
But the young girl, in choking voice and  
hollow,  
Said—‘O my misery !

‘I have no Bible.’ Then the lady gladly  
Gave her own treasured Book ;  
And the poor girl departed, slowly, sadly,  
But with one grateful look.

Not many days had passed, when on a morning  
The Book was sent again  
To the kind lady. Death, with scarce a warning,  
But with most cruel pain,

Had seized the girl,—her agony in dying  
Prevented words. She fell,  
Crossing a road,—and all unheeded lying,  
Death suddenly befell.

They found a letter, sorrowful, heart-broken,  
‘Mother, I’ll sin no more,’—  
The penitent words that she would fain have  
spoken,  
Written the night before.

‘O take me home again, my mother, take me ;  
I long, I long for home.  
God has had mercy. He did not forsake me ;  
His messenger said “*Come.*”’

There is no more to tell. May this true story  
Sink into all our hearts !  
Do we, who see a little of the glory,  
Faithfully do our parts ?

O why are we so cold to one another ?  
Why do not *we* say ‘Come’ ?  
Then it might be our bliss to bring some  
brother  
Or wandering sister home.

## In the Darkness and in the Light.

### PART I.

#### IN THE DARKNESS.

‘YES, it is warm in the sunlight,  
Warm and pleasant and sweet,  
With boughs of rich fruit above you,  
And soft green turf at your feet.  
Earth has its sunny places,  
I see them from where I stand,  
Shivering out in the darkness,  
With no one to lend me a hand.

‘Yes, there are joys in the distance,  
Pleasures, but not for me,—  
Flowers that I may not gather,  
And love that I only see,—  
See thro’ the tears that blind me,  
And yet I can rarely weep,  
My heart is starved into numbness,  
My only comfort is sleep.

'The day brings nought but labour,  
Labour ceaseless and stern ;  
There is never a thought beyond it,  
My work and the wages I earn.  
Never a pause or a break,  
Yet you ask me to go with you,  
And praise the Father in heaven,  
Just as the rich folks do.

'Well may *they* call Him "Father"  
Who stand in the bright warm sun,  
Folded in love as a garment,  
And pray that His will may be done.  
But I cannot do it, my lady,  
It seems a pretence to try ;  
Men take no heed that I suffer,  
How will God hear my cry ?

'God, who lives in the sunlight,  
With angels around His throne,  
We know that *they* hide their faces,  
And how could I lift my own ?  
Nay,—leave me here in the darkness,  
It suits my poor feeble sight ;  
Heaven is too high above me,  
I never could bear its light.

'A few more years at the farthest,  
And then I shall take my rest,  
Deeper down in the darkness,  
Deep in the earth's cold breast.

Then may the rain fall upon me,  
 The storm and the wintry blast  
 May howl as they will, but, my lady,  
 I shall sleep sound at last.'

'What if I tell you the darkness  
 Cannot hide you from God?  
 What if I tell you the spirit  
 Sleeps not within the sod?'  
 'Nay, gentle lady, have pity!  
 Take not this hope away;  
 I have lived my life in the darkness,  
 And how could I bear the day?'

'I will tell you then of a Brother,  
 A Man of Sorrows, who knew  
 Pain and trouble and anguish  
 More than have fallen on you,—  
 The Son of a King, but so humble,  
 He left all His glory behind,  
 To live with the children of darkness,  
 And open the eyes of the blind.

'And wherever He came He brought healing,  
 Wherever He came He brought light,  
 Enough to give warmth and comfort,  
 But not to dazzle the sight;  
 His heart was so loving and tender,  
 That all who were poor and distressed  
 Would gather around Him by thousands,  
 And find in His presence rest.

‘The sorrowful sought Him for comfort,  
The sick, to be healed by His touch ;  
He wept for their sins and their sorrows,  
He wept, for He loved them so much.  
And He said, “I have left my kingdom,  
To bring you, as children, home ;  
I will guide you, and teach you, and bless  
you ;  
And now, weary souls, will you come ? ’ ’

‘O lady, if He is in heaven,  
I feel I could go to Him,  
I would just creep in with the others  
When the light was growing dim.  
The very thought of His goodness  
To us, for whom nobody cares,  
Has filled my heart with longing,  
My soul with wordless prayers.’

‘What if I tell you He sees you,  
And knows how your heart is stirred,  
And calls you by name to serve Him  
In thought and deed and word ?  
What if I tell you He suffered  
And died to bring you home ;  
O sister, so heavily burdened,  
Will you not rise and come ? ’



PART II.

IN THE LIGHT.

'GLAD to see me so cheery?

Lady, your words have brought  
Blessing to this poor alley  
More than you knew or thought.  
It isn't the place that matters ;  
The sun's warm light, you know,  
Can make the stones of a ruin  
All in a beautiful glow.

'And since you were here, my lady,  
My room is more cheerful, you see ;  
I'm proud to show you the pictures  
And flowers that Will brought to me.  
Little Willie, the lame boy,  
So grateful for just a word,  
I pitied the child for his weakness,  
And told him about the Lord.

'He used to be always fretting,  
But now he talks of his Home,  
And when will he go and see it?  
And when will the dear Lord come ?  
He cannot work like the others,  
A puny sickly boy,  
But the wonderful Book you gave me  
Has filled his heart with joy.

'I'm but a poor dull learner,  
Yet the light comes as Willie reads ;  
The words and the life, O my lady,  
Are just what the poor heart needs.  
*Now*, though my work is heavy,  
And wearies me, yet I know  
There's a Friend who will help and guide me  
Each step that I have to go.

'We did not know our Father,  
We never thought that He cared  
For us, poor wretched creatures,  
Or heeded how we fared.  
But when Jesus tells of His goodness,  
And says He is one with Him,  
It seems that our eyes have been holden,  
Or misery made them dim.

'I have many a sorrowful moment,  
When I think of my wasted years,  
But the child has no such trouble,  
No doubts or desponding fears.  
And it does me good to see him,  
The happy look in his eyes,  
As he reads the loving message  
With a sort of glad surprise.

'And how we watch for the Sunday,  
Willie and I thro' the week,  
'Tis like a dream of heaven  
To hear the minister speak.

And the music, so grand and solemn,  
Has often made me cry,  
For it minds me of father and mother,  
And days that have long gone by.

‘But a few more years at the farthest,  
And then, when my time is come,  
The hard schooldays will be ended,  
And O for the rest of Home!  
I have now a little foretaste,  
As Willie sits by my side,  
For I love the child.’ ‘And love is light,’  
A gentle voice replied.

### From Summer to Spring.

DEEP silence,—if not for the low, tender sighing  
Of wind and of wave, for the day sinks to  
rest  
With as holy a calm as a saint that is dying,  
And heaven seems to open her gate in the  
west.

That day has rejoiced many hearts by its glad-  
ness,  
And beautified lives by the gift of its own ;  
It has spoken of rest, if to some it brought sad-  
ness,  
But now it is ended,—its ministry done.

To Margaret, whose heart is with joy overflow-  
ing,  
It whispered of happiness, beauty, and love ;  
Alas ! while the sky is with tenderness glowing,  
Her thoughts are of earth, tho' her eyes rest  
above.

She sees the sun kissing the beautiful ocean,  
And blessing the waves ere he leaves them  
a while,  
And she fancies they quiver and burn with  
emotion  
At parting from him who alone made them  
smile.

She wishes the glory, the heavenly glory,  
Could linger and spread,—but it soon fades  
away,  
And she does not herein see a type of life's  
story,  
How surely the darkness must follow the day.

Her heart is repeating a strain that will cover  
Her life with a glory more exquisite still;  
And she sees in the shadows no gloom while her  
lover  
Is near her to guard and defend her from ill.

Her lover, her husband,—he stands there, re-  
garding  
Not ocean or cloud, but one angel-like face;  
(O Time, spare the young by a little retarding!  
Vain wish! while we make it thou fliest  
apace.)

It is Summer within her, and Summer around  
her,

The breezes are soft, and most fair are the  
flowers,  
And life's dearest happiness, true love, has found  
her,  
And gives, like a fairy, swift wings to the  
hours.

That calm Summer day, it has passed as a  
vision,

Too glorious and happy to stay very long ;—  
How certain from brightness to gloom the  
transition !—

O Margaret, sweet Margaret, arise and be  
strong !

The flowers are all closing, resigned to night's  
chillness,

The birds are all sleeping with head under  
wing ;

The angels are near thee, and now, in earth's  
stillness,

Hear, Roger and Margaret, the songs that  
they sing.

*The Angel of Pain and the Angel of Peace  
sing together.*

' O may they gain the bliss divine,  
To whom earth's joys are given,  
And see, in all things fair, a sign  
Of heaven ! '

*Angel of Pain—*

‘This human love is very sweet,  
And it may well suffice  
To make the earth, tho’ incomplete,  
A paradise!’

*Angel of Peace—*

‘Yes,—here behold them fully blest,  
Roger and Margaret;  
No dream of ill disturbs their rest.’

*Angel of Pain—*                    ‘As yet!’

*Angel of Peace—*

‘O touch them not, for to my care  
The twain to-day are given;  
Let this brief calm their hearts prepare  
For heaven.’

*Angel of Pain—*

‘Where love and joy are perfected,  
Where my sad task will cease,  
And I arise transfigured  
To peace.’

*Both angels—*

‘O may they gain the bliss divine,  
To whom earth’s pain is given,  
And as the stars more glorious shine  
In heaven!’

In passing so near, did the angels just fan them,  
Or echo take care that the strain should not  
cease ?

For Roger and Margaret join in the anthem,  
And whisper of 'Paradise,' 'Heaven,' and  
'Peace.'

. . . . .  
The days pass away, and the Summer's rich  
splendour

Dissolves, unawares, into Autumn's repose,  
And Nature herself seems more solemn and  
tender

As earth's joyous holiday draws to its close.

But Roger and Margaret think not of sorrow :  
What matter to them that the year must soon  
die ?

Their love is their Summer, they fear not the  
morrow,

And hear not, in passing, the world's  
smothered sigh.

They walk thro' the cornfields and see the grain  
bowing,

So humble thro' ripeness,—so ready to fall ;  
They watch the leaves dropping, they hear the  
wind blowing,

But hear not, or heed not, the Autumn's low  
call.



Too grave for their gladness—are ears filled with  
singing,  
Disturbed by the sound of the wind's gentle  
grief?  
Or can hearts that with joy to heaven's gate are  
upspringing,  
Be stopped in their flight by the fall of a leaf?

But a storm bursts on Margaret,—too suddenly  
breaking  
The trance that has held her so long and so  
fast;  
Her Summer has fled like a dream on awaking,  
She knows it is Autumn, chill Autumn, at  
last.

The sea that has flowed to her feet so demurely,  
The sea she has praised as it glistened in light,  
That reflected the sunshine of heaven so purely,  
Must bear her brave Roger away from her  
sight.

She feels now how mournful are Autumn's low  
dirges,  
The storm and the wind and the sorrowful  
waves  
Are telling one story with pitiful surges,  
Of grief for earth's changes, earth's partings,  
earth's graves.

The corn that erewhile has been waving so  
glorious,  
Is now lying prone, or imprisoned in sheaves;  
And it seems as if death over life were victorious,  
As the flowers shed their blooms, and the  
trees lose their leaves.

•   •   •   •   •   •  
How stern in the Winter is ocean's complaining!  
How cold are the billows that break on the  
shore!  
Yet sterner the heart where dull sorrow is  
reigning,  
And beating out hope with her cold 'Never  
more.'

How sad are the trees in their great desolation,  
When branches are bare, and the birds cease  
to sing!  
But, lifting their arms in one long supplication,  
They wait, in dumb patience, the coming of  
Spring.

How hard is the spirit that binds up and freezes  
The earth and its waters whene'er he appears!  
Yet he yields to the sunbeams and gentle south  
breezes,  
And tenderly melts, at their kisses, to tears.

More bereaved than the trees, and more stern  
than the ocean,  
More dumb than the birds, and more hard  
than the frost,  
Is Margaret's poor heart,—it seems dead to  
emotion,  
Since tidings have reached her that Roger is  
lost.

The ship has gone down,—and, alas ! it was  
freighted  
With all Margaret's happiness, all her heart's  
love ;  
Thro' long lonely weeks she has drearily waited,  
And now earth is empty as heaven above.

For as yet she is deaf to the voice that reminds  
her  
The sun is still shining tho' hidden by cloud ;  
Her grief, like a fog, to Heaven's tenderness  
blinds her,  
And wraps the world round in a vapoury  
shroud.

The Spring comes, and lays her soft hand on the  
bushes  
So gently, the stern hedges thrill at her touch,  
And the swallows and finches, the cuckoos and  
thrushes,  
All hasten to meet her, they love her so much.

The trees whisper gaily in joyous elation,  
That Winter has ended his long dreary  
reign,  
And the breeze murmurs softly in kind gratulation,  
'The Springtime is come! ye are budding  
again!'

The birds build their nests, and full noisily  
chatter  
In wilderness, garden, in field, and in lane,  
And the children say gladly, as onward they  
patter,  
'O listen, the birds are all singing again!'

The seedlings, long buried, look up into heaven,  
And drink in, delighted, its dew and its  
rain;  
Rejoicing with tears for the life newly given,  
They say to the sunbeams, 'We're rising  
again.'

But Margaret,—she knows not the Winter has  
ended;  
For her no hope buds, not the tiniest leaf;  
And as yet no soft gleam of the sunlight has  
blended  
Its ray with the dark purple cloud of her  
grief.

There is one little child to whom Margaret has  
kindly  
Given smiles and caresses in happier days,  
But now, when she meets her, all silently,  
blindly,  
She passes with dull unremembering gaze.

One night in her dreams this fair child had  
caressed her,  
And said, 'O dear lady, I cannot rejoice  
Because you are sad;'—and when Margaret had  
blessed her,  
She said, 'Up in heaven God misses your  
voice.'

Then Margaret awoke, and the thrushes were  
singing ;  
(How dumb would the world be, could she  
have her choice !)  
But musing, she said, 'When the greenwoods  
are ringing  
With melody, no one can miss my poor voice.'

Yet she turns her slow steps to the cottage, half-  
fearing,  
Half hoping that little one's face to behold ;  
In the dream her sweet manner had seemed  
so endearing,  
It warmed the poor heart that was dying  
with cold.

She meets her,—how radiant the dear little face  
is !

Her hands full of wild flowers just culled from  
the lane ;

‘ O look ! ’ she cries joyfully, ‘ primroses, daisies,  
And violets ; see ! they are all born again ! ’

‘ Born again ! ’ to poor Margaret the words were  
a message

From heaven, and they chimed in her dull  
weary brain,

Till she saw in the glory of Spring a sure  
presage

Of life and of gladness to souls ‘ born again. ’

She prayed for new birth,—at Christ’s feet  
meekly kneeling,

New hopes budded forth, and her heart  
learnt to sing ;

She praised Him for sorrow, so sweet was the  
healing,

And, taught by a child, found the meaning of  
Spring !

### Offering the First-fruits.

THE Springtime comes again,  
The happy childlike Spring,  
And all the little flowers are glad,  
The birds a welcome sing.  
The trees put on their leaves,  
The grass again is green,  
And in the meadows everywhere  
The merry lambs are seen.

But in the crowded town,  
And in the narrow street,  
No Springtime comes, no song of birds,  
No breath of violets sweet ;  
And little boys and girls,  
With faces pale and sad,  
Have nothing but the stars at night  
To cheer and make them glad.

For even the kind sun  
Can shine but little there,  
Houses and chimneys, clouds and smoke,  
Obscure all visions fair.

How can those weary folk,  
In rags and tatters drest,  
Know anything of Him who said,  
‘Come unto Me and rest’?

And yet how much they need  
The knowledge of His love!  
They cannot see it in His works,  
Save in the skies above.  
Alas! poor wretched souls,  
Unless some glimpse be given  
Of purity and beauty here,  
What can they know of heaven?

O ye who name the name  
Of Jesus Christ our Lord,  
Remember how He pitied them,  
Remember His own word,—  
‘My poor I leave with you,  
In them your Saviour see;  
For if ye give a joy to these,  
Ye give it unto Me.’

And when you look around,  
And see the violets sweet,  
When primroses and buttercups  
Spring up beneath your feet,  
Think of His wondrous love  
Who strews the earth with flowers,  
In token of His tender care  
For this fallen world of ours.



Go to some cheerless room,  
Where all the walls are bare,  
Where nought but misery is known,  
And leave the violets there.  
'Tis but a little gift,  
Yet when the day is done,  
You will have cheered some weary soul,  
Have helped some little one.

It is the Lord Himself  
Who standeth at the door,  
And begs the lilies of the field  
In person of His poor.  
Then in the crowded town,  
And in the narrow street,  
Take the first blossoms of the Spring,  
And lay them at His feet.

### A Barn in July.

No one could praise it ;  
    Square built and red,  
The barn had no beauty,  
    As every one said.  
Yet is kind Nature  
    Trying to fold  
Round it her mantle  
    Of green and of gold.  
Patiently, tenderly,  
    Never in haste,  
Using the fragments  
    That nothing may waste.

Tiniest seeds  
    In tiniest chinks,  
Hiding so snugly  
    Where nobody thinks.  
Cheered by the sun  
    And fed by the dew,  
There they found rest  
    And they quietly grew,  
Scarcely perceived  
    Till their bright golden flowers  
Gladdened some heart  
    In July's sunny hours.

So in the hedges,  
Rugged and stern,  
Here is a rose  
And there is a fern.  
So on a stone,  
Graceless and cold,  
Mosses will gather  
Of green and of gold.  
So on a road,  
Dusty and drear,  
Grasses will grow  
Afar and anear.

Thus doth sweet charity  
Sow in the chinks,  
Quietly, softly,  
When nobody thinks,—  
Kind little words  
And kind little deeds,  
Dropt in the heart  
Unthought of as seeds.  
Safe for a time  
They are hidden away,  
Certain to spring up  
And blossom some day.

### Shadows.

SHADOWS of evil everywhere,  
In a world that was made both good and fair !  
Shadows of pain and doubt and gloom,  
Rest on our lives and haunt the tomb.  
Even the little children weep  
At the shadows of darkness ere they sleep,  
And the aged saint who has kept the faith,  
Must pass thro' the awful shadow of death.

But darkest of all is the spectre Sin ;  
O my soul, forbid it to enter in !  
Thou canst bear the darkness of hope deferred,  
The shadow cast by an unkind word ;  
And as for the phantoms of pain and loss,  
They are glorified shadows of the cross ;  
But the shade of sin,—it were better to die,  
Than carelessly under that darkness to lie.

**Lights.**

YET the blessed light is everywhere,  
By the very shadows made more fair ;  
Light amid pain and doubt and gloom,  
And a glory resting on the tomb.  
Light in the little children's eyes,  
Beaming with love and glad surprise ;  
And a halo round the dying bed,  
As if by a passing angel shed.

I think, in the night as in the day,  
There is ever some little kindly ray,  
Just enough to show the next stepping-stone,  
And prove that we are not left alone.  
Tho' while we are sorrowing, friends may sleep,  
And no mortal eye may behold us weep,  
And we feel that the gloom of Gethsemane,  
Enfolds us without its sanctity.

The shadows of evil will flee away,  
But the light will expand to the perfect Day ;  
The light of love that glimmers below,  
How it will brighten and burn and glow ;

When hearts that are chilled and wounded  
here

Shall be raised to a higher, holier sphere,  
Where hope and faith will be lost in sight,  
And darkness be swallowed up of light.

### Working and Dreaming.

O WORKERS, busy workers,  
Ye noble of the land,  
Who spend your strength in toiling,  
With earnest heart and hand ;  
Whose work is good and lovely,  
Who never *dream*, but *do*,  
How poor a thing the poet's life  
Must often seem to you !

But yet, despise not dreamers,  
If, in some weary time,  
Your spirit has been nerved for work  
By melody or rhyme ;  
If fancies sweet have made you strong,  
Then surely there is worth  
In dreams that shed a glory  
Round the common things of earth.

The life that is all working,  
And has no time for dreams,  
Can scarcely be the highest,  
However high it seems ;

As flowers without their fragrance,  
Or fruit without its bloom,  
So is the life of labour  
Where fancy has no room.

And life that is all dreaming  
Is a poor life at best,  
The dreams that can ennoble  
Are not of sloth, but rest:  
Rest, after active service,  
Thought by obedience stirred,  
Whispers of heavenly music  
Amid life's duties heard.



### The Unspeakable Glory.

Is it nothing, or is it all ?—  
The message the poet fain would speak  
Tho' he knows that words are poor and weak,—  
The something the artist tries to paint  
In group of cattle or head of saint,—  
The song which the true musician hears,  
And his feeble rendering draws our tears ?

Is it nothing, or is it all ?—  
The glory that sometimes is descried  
When life and love are intensified,—  
The vision that once in a lifetime seen,  
We feel as in paradise we had been,—  
The expectation of something more  
Than ever was seen upon sea or shore ?

What lies around us, beyond, above,  
Which we cannot grasp, yet adoring, love ?  
Which the city child in his garret spies  
As he looks from his rags to the starry skies,  
And hides in his heart of hearts as a key  
To open a door from his misery ?

Is it a ray from the source of light,  
Or a spark we have kindled in the night ?  
Is it a fancy, or is it a truth,  
The voice of an angel, or folly of youth ?  
Is it the Master, His smile, His call ?  
Is it nothing, or is it all ?



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